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COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE

Eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 117th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 7 May 1992, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. VOYAME

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Annual report of the Committee on its activities

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS ACTIVITIES (agenda item 12) (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1 and Add.1 to 16, CRP.2 and Add.1, and CRP.3 and Add.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited members to consider the annual report of the Committee on its activities.

Chapter I. Organizational and other matters (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1)

2. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1 was adopted.

Chapter II. Action by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.2)

3. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.2 was adopted.

Chapter III. Submission of reports by States parties under article 19 of the Convention (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.3)

4. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.3 was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Ecuador (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.4)

5. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.4 was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.5)

6. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.5 was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.6)

7. The CHAIRMAN asked for clarification of the words "medical compensation" at the end of paragraph 21, and of the meaning of the fourth sentence of paragraph 22.

8. Mr. BURNS (Rapporteur) proposed that the words "medical compensation", in paragraph 21, should be amended to read "compensation for personal injuries sustained during the earlier period". With regard to paragraph 22, the hope expressed by members of the Committee had been that persons to be detained in solitary confinement would first be examined by doctors, so as to ensure that they were in a fit state to undergo such treatment.

9. The CHAIRMAN asked the Rapporteur to amend the relevant sentence of paragraph 22 in order to reflect that meaning.

10. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.6, as orally amended, was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.7)

11. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.7 was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Uruguay (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.8 and 12)

12. Documents CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.8 and Add.12 were adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Australia (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.9)

13. The CHAIRMAN asked for clarification of the context of the final sentence of paragraph 28.

14. Mr. BURNS (Rapporteur) confirmed that it was the Ministry of Immigration that provided its officials with training in the identification of torture victims. That Ministry was responsible for dealing with refugees; its officials were trained to recognize the indicia of torture inflicted in the State of origin.

15. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the penultimate sentence of paragraph 29, asked whether it was true that a decision concerning a mentally-ill person's release from an institution or the continuation of his treatment had to be taken by several doctors.

16. Mr. BURNS (Rapporteur) said that such a decision had to be signed by two doctors. That requirement related to involuntary, not to voluntary committals. An initial committal, if involuntary, required a decision by two doctors and a magistrate.

17. The CHAIRMAN asked the Rapporteur to amend paragraph 29 so as to provide fuller details on those points.

18. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.9, as orally amended, was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Bulgaria (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.10)

19. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.10 was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Cameroon (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.11)

20. Mr. DIPANDA MOUELLE took issue with the statement in paragraph 24 that elections of the President of Cameroon were held by a "closed list system"; in point of fact, the President was elected by universal suffrage. Perhaps there was some confusion with the procedure for the election of Deputies.

21. Mr. BRUNI (Secretary of the Committee) observed that the statement in question derived from paragraph 33 of the summary record of the Committee's 102nd meeting (CAT/C/SR.102).

22. Mr. BURNS (Rapporteur) said that it was clearly imperative to include the information that the President was elected by universal suffrage. Like other members of the Committee, he was unsure of the meaning of the expression "closed list system".

23. Mr. LORENZO said it was his understanding that a closed list system was one in which the list of candidates, once compiled, could not be added to. Under such a system, it was not permissible for electors to write in the names of additional candidates on ballot papers.

24. The CHAIRMAN asked the Rapporteur to amend the wording of paragraph 24 so as to reflect the fact that the President was elected by universal suffrage.

25. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.11, as orally amended, was adopted.

Chapter IV. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention: Luxembourg (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.13)

26. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to an apparent gap in the second line of paragraph 20. In addition, he did not fully grasp the meaning of the second sentence of the paragraph.

27. Mr. BRUNI (Secretary of the Committee) said that the gap in the second line was attributable to a computer error and would be removed. As to the second sentence, it had been taken from paragraph 9 of the relevant summary record (CAT/C/SR.108).

28. The CHAIRMAN said that if that was the case, the sentence should be left as it stood.

29. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.13 was adopted.

Chapter V. Consideration of information received under article 20 of the Convention (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.16)

30. Mr. BURNS (Rapporteur) said that the only amendment required to the document would be to indicate in paragraph 4 that five closed meetings had been held by the Committee during its eighth session.

31. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.1/Add.16, as orally amended, was adopted.

Chapter VI. Consideration of communications under article 22 of the Convention (CAT/C/VIII/CRP.2)

32. Mr. BURNS (Rapporteur) said that it would be necessary to add a paragraph 12, which would read: "In order to expedite the examination of communications, the Committee may assign a case to a working group or a special rapporteur. At its eighth session, the Committee appointed rapporteurs responsible for communications Nos. 7/1990 and 8/1991." The additional paragraph was necessary to clarify the working arrangements adopted by the Committee at its present session.

33. Document CAT/C/VIII/CRP.2, as amended, was adopted.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.